There is but one road to the Path; at its very end alone the Voice of the Silence can be heard. —*The Voice of the Silence*

THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 56 MARCH, 1968 NUMBER 5

THE PORTENTS OF FUTURE MAN

THE eighteenth-century protagonists of the Theosophical Movement were all in some sense representative of a particular calling. Mesmer devoted himself to the healing arts; Saint-Germain engaged in high diplomacy; Cagliostro worked in medicine and for the reform of Masonry; St. Martin belonged to a mystical school, although he was also author of the famous *ternaire,* the threefold foundation of the French Revolution—Liberty, Equality, Fraternity; and Thomas Paine was a political figure.

In the nineteenth century, the design changed. H. P. Blavatsky was identified with no existing social differentiation. She gained no fame as a healer; while she defended the authenticity of many of the phenomena of the Spiritualists, she made it plain that she was not a medium and did not share the Spiritualists' views. Psychological wonders played some part in attracting attention to her ideas, but the basic appeal of H.P.B. to the world was through the power of the thought of a human being. Fame or status contributed nothing to any of her accomplishments. She had no institutional allies. The works of the mind came first, and then the Theosophical Society was formed to serve their purposes.

No claim of "authority" is involved in pointing out that the Three Objects appeal to the allegiance of man's future evolution. The evidence for their radical validity is supplied, not by any sort of research "specialists," but by the individual intelligence of inquirers. The very idea of "intermediaries" between human beings

and the truth about themselves is discouraged by the doctrines of Theosophy. Theosophy tells of Teachers, but shows that true teachers always insist that self-knowledge must be forged by each man for himself.

H.P.B. cared little or nothing for "organization." Her emphasis is on principle. When, in her major work, *The Secret Doctrine,* she outlined the fundamental keys to understanding, these were the philosophical first principles on which all thought is based. She spoke, it is true, of "initiations," but such advancements in knowledge could come to the individual searcher only as confirmation of an inward development already achieved. H.P.B. was not reluctant to speak of the "heroic effort" required by man's evolution. She made it plain that her loyalty to *her* Teachers grew out of seeing their absolute faithfulness to the laws of nature, of which they were, indeed, the living expression.

She sought no "followers." She invited her readers to find the same sort of verification of the Theosophical teachings that she had obtained, and pointed out that there was no other way to reach the truth. Only a few years after the publication of the Darwinian Theory in 1859, she taught the doctrine of *spiritual* evolution and gave a schematic outline of the developmental processes which would eventually become manifest in the experience of mankind. Concerning these subtle psychological transformations, she recorded sufficient detail for the individual to begin to recognize in his own nature a laboratory of inner discovery—the only place where true, first-hand knowledge is to be obtained. Such certainty, she said, while difficult, is not impossible, and she pointed to the ethical teaching of Universal Brotherhood as providing the sole access to the strength and endurance that successful human evolution will demand of every man. She set these teachings down; she placed them in a majestic framework of cosmological and anthropological doctrines; she connected these doctrines, wherever possible, with the discoveries of modern science, and also used them as critical tools to show the mistakes in interpretation made by science of various of its facts. She did all this, and remained on the scene long enough to establish in the world a nucleus of disciples who, by their own awakening intelligence, their karmic attraction to the Theosophic cause, and the hunger of their hearts, found resolve to keep her work alive and growing in the world.

But H.P.B. did not work alone. She had a colleague and co-

worker, William Q. Judge. It is useless to make "claims" for Mr. Judge. When both the historic role and the quality of work of a human being are of public record, those who want to understand them are able to do so. Yet it seems plain that if the Theosophical teachings concerning man's nature and potentiality are taken seriously, it follows that those who are able to communicate them well are also practical embodiments of them.

Judge, like H.P.B., had no eminence save through the understanding he revealed. If an inquirer could not see that Judge knew much that H.P.B. knew, and learned it in the same way that she had learned it, he had little hope of recognizing Judge's role in the Theosophical Movement. Claims would do no good, since a central purpose of the Theosophical philosophy is to outlaw the authority of any sort of "occult" claims. Acknowledging Judge is a way of accepting evidence that lovers of truth and practitioners of brotherhood are not "unique" beings, but arise in human development through faithfulness to ideals. Judge gave evidence through his life on how to support a Teacher and further that Teacher's purposes and work. By his efforts the teachings of Theosophy gained currency all over the United States. His life was a practical example of how to work fruitfully for the Theosophic cause. He knew the alchemical art of refining ordinary language into philosophical simplicities. He showed that true impersonality increased warm-heartedness and friendly regard. He built on the promise of human beings, and when this promise faltered, he demonstrated how a man can himself remain firm. He never voiced blame. He could build nothing for the future with blame. Yet he saw the weaknesses and fallibilities of human nature and showed his associates how to guard against the harm they could do to the Work.

The world has had wise and good beings for guide and example before 1875. There have been many teachers and philosophers who repeated the ancient doctrines. But one searches history in vain for a situation exactly comparable to that in which H.P.B. and Judge labored. They taught simply as human beings, serving other human beings. She put on record an outline of all history that gave the philosophy a rational, experiential ground, and he extended what she taught in the idiom of the common man. Both declared the capacity of the common man to know for himself. They were fully aware that by no means everyone would seize this opportunity, but they also knew, from the analogy of nature and by personal experi-

ence, that all beginnings have their origin in invisible living germs. They gave out of themselves the first soil for this new life, and made a matrix of their thought for the coming cycle of human evolution. To work for Theosophy is to participate in the unfolding of this cycle. Its exultant pulse beats for all that live.

IMPORTANCE OF PHILOSOPHICAL KNOWLEDGE

The greatest of the Ancients inculcated by both symbols and books the absolute necessity for the acquirement of philosophical knowledge, inasmuch as strength or special faculties are useless without it. Those Greeks and others who recorded some of the wisdom of the elder Egyptians well illustrated this. They said, "that in the symbols it was shown, as where Hermes is represented as an old and a young man, intending by this to signify that he who rightly inspects sacred matters ought to be both intelligent and strong, one of these without the other being imperfect. And for the same reason the symbol of great Sphinx was established; the beast signifying strength, and the man wisdom. For strength when destitute of the ruling aid of wisdom, is overcome by stupid astonishment confusing all things together; and for the purpose of action the intellect is useless when it is deprived of strength." So, whether our strength is that of sympathy or of astral vision, we will be confounded if philosophical knowledge be absent.

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE

VI: Sir Philip Sidney

WHEN sickened with the petty aims of the world around—when wearied and despairing in the quest of the ideal brotherhood, it is refreshing to recognise a kinship of spirit even across the gulf of centuries—to feel that the brotherhood of love we seek for is no vain dream, and that when we are worthy to enter its ranks, comrades such as Sidney will be there to welcome us.

On reading over the life of this paragon of the Elizabethan period, though his actual achievement seems at first sight scarcely to warrant the renown he won, the aroma of his character which so captivated his contemporaries, is still felt to be the truest criterion by which to judge the man.

But the chief lesson to be learned by students of occultism from the life of Sidney is that in proportion as passion rises to intensity is its power to act as the true alkahest in the transmutation of the baser metals of our nature into the pure gold of the heart.

For the mass of men who stagnate through life without one intense passion to fire their nature, the formula of Eliphas Levi—modified as follows would indeed seem to be appropriate—though of course referring to the ultimate destiny, not to the result of any one earth-life. "The spiritual passion towards good and the spiritual passion towards evil are the two poles of the world of souls: between these two poles vegetate and die without remembrance the useless portion of mankind."

To see that Sidney was made in a more fiery mould, it needs but to read his "Astrophel and Stella." Though the complete purging of his nature and the conquest of self is only made apparent in the concluding sonnets, the passionate outbursts of his love, and the fiery path he had to tread are manifest throughout the poem, and naturally form a bond of union—all the closer when the culmination

---

Note.—This article was first printed by Wm. Q. Judge in the *Path* for July, 1887.

of the desire has been identical—with those who have had analogous experience.

It is perhaps difficult at first to realize how the love of an actual living woman should have the same purging and purifying effect as a similar love idealised, but nature is not to be bound by rules of our making in her methods of drawing different souls towards perfection. Both may be taken as illustrations of the fact that whether emotion starts from a pleasurable or a painful source, on reaching a high enough degree of intensity, it enters the region where pleasure and pain are merged in one, and then it is that it becomes the solvent of the man's lower nature.

It must indeed have been a fiery ordeal that Sidney passed through, for the earthly love by its intensity so to burn itself clean out of the heart, and leave only the lofty aspirations expressed in the following sonnet, which truly seem to formulate the very sum and substance of Theosophic thought.

Thou blind man's mark, thou fool's self chosen snare,
Fond fancies' scum, and dregs of scattered thought;
Band of all evils; cradle of causeless care;
Thou web of will whose end is never wrought!
Desire, Desire! I have too dearly bought
With price of mangled mind thy worthless ware;
Too long, too long, asleep thou hast me brought,
Who shouldst my mind to higher things prepare.
But yet in vain thou hast my ruin sought;
In vain thou mad'st me to vain things aspire;
In vain thou kindlest all thy smoky fire:
For virtue hath this better lesson taught—
Within myself to seek my only hire,
Desiring naught but how to kill desire.

PILGRIM

CONSCIENCE THE ARBITER

Philosophy herself has taught me to rely on my own conscience rather than on the opinions of others, and always to take thought not so much that people may speak no evil of me, as, rather, that I myself may neither say nor do aught that is evil.

—GIOVANNI PICO DELLO MIRANDOLA

CYCLIC IMPRESSION AND RETURN AND OUR EVOLUTION

MR. Chairman, Fellow Theosophists, Ladies and Gentlemen: The title of what I am about to say to you is CYCLIC IMPRESSION AND RETURN AND OUR EVOLUTION. Now what is a cycle? It has nothing to do with the word psychic, and I am sorry to have to say that, because I heard some people this morning repeat the title as "psychic" instead of "cyclic," seeming to think perhaps that that was the same thing, or had some relation to it. The word cyclic is derived from the Greek word *Kuklos,* or a ring. It has been turned in the English language into the word cycle, by the process of saying Kykle, and then cycle. The corresponding word in the Sanscrit is *Kalpa,* which has in fact a wider and a deeper meaning; because cycle in English is a word which covers, is used for, and thus somewhat confuses, many cycles. It is used for the small cycles, and the larger cycles, the intermediate cycles and the great ones, whereas the word *Kalpa* means and implies only one cycle of a large size, and the smaller cycles within that are designated by other words.

What is a cycle? It is a circle, a ring. But not properly a ring like a wedding ring, which runs into itself, but more properly like a screw thread, which takes the form of a spiral, and thus beginning at the bottom, turns on itself, and goes up. It is something like the great Horseshoe Curve in the Pennsylvania Railroad. There you go around the curve at the lower end; you go down into the horseshoe, and as you turn the grade rises, so that when you arrive at the opposite side you have gotten no further than the beginning, but you have risen just the distance between the two ends of the grade.

But what do we mean by a cycle in Theosophy, in our own investigations of nature, or man, or civilization, or our own development, our own origin, our own destiny? We mean by cycle, just what the Egyptians, the Hindoos and the philosophers of the Middle Ages meant by it; that is, that there is a periodical return or cycling

---

NOTE.—This lecture was delivered by William Q. Judge before the Convention of the Theosophical Society, April 25, 1892. It has appeared in previous volumes of THEOSOPHY.

back, circling back of something from some place once more. That is why it is called cycle, inasmuch as it returns upon itself, seemingly; but in the Theosophical doctrine, and in the ancient doctrines, it is always a little higher in the sense of perfection or progress. That is to say as the Egyptians held, cycles prevail everywhere, things come back again, events return, history comes back, and so in this century we have the saying: "History repeats itself."

But where do Theosophists say that cyclic law prevails? We say that it prevails everywhere. It prevails in every kingdom of nature, in the animal kingdom, the mineral world, the human world; in history, in the sky, on the earth, we say that not only do cycles pertain, and appertain, and obtain in and to the earth and its inhabitants, but also in what the Hindoos call the three kingdoms of the universe, the three worlds; that is, that below us, ourselves, and that above.

Now, if you will turn to Buckle, a great writer of the English school, you will find him saying in one of his standard books, a great book often quoted, that there is no doubt cyclic law prevails in regard to nations, that they have come back apparently the same, only slightly improved or degraded, for there is also a downward cycle included within those that rise; but Buckle did not discover a law. He simply once more stated what the ancients had said over and over again. And it has always seemed to me that if Buckle and other people of that kind would pay a little more attention to the ancients, they would save themselves a great deal of trouble, for he obtained his law by much delving, much painstaking labour, whereas he might have gotten the law if he had consulted the ancients, who always taught that there were cycles, and that there always will be cycles.

Among the ancients they had a great many large and important cycles. In their classification they had a Saros and a Naros, which are not understood to-day by us. They are known to some extent, but what exactly they are, we do not know. The Egyptians taught there was a great sidereal cycle, and that is recognized to-day, at last; that is the cycle of 25,000 years, the great one caused by the fact that the sun went through the signs of the Zodiac in that length of time. Now, I do not assume that you know nothing about astronomy, but in order to make it clear, it will be better for me to state this over and over again, just as it is. The sun goes through the signs of the Zodiac from day to day and from year to year, but at the same time, in going through the signs of the Zodiac, he goes back slowly, like the hands of the clock ticking off the time. In going through

that period he comes back to the same point again, and retards himself, or goes back; that is called the precession of the equinoxes, and it is so many seconds in such a length of time. Those seconds in the sky turned into time show you that the sun takes 25,000 and odd years to come back to the place from which he started out at any particular time; that is to say, if you imagine that on the first of April, this year, the sun was in such a degree of Aries, one of the signs of the Zodiac, he will not get back to that sign by the precession of the equinoxes until 25,000 years have passed away.

Now, the sun is the centre of our solar system and the earth revolves around it, and as the earth revolves she turns upon her axis. The sun, it is known now by astronomers, as it was known by the ancients (who were ourselves in fact), revolves around a centre. That is, that while we are going around the sun, he is going around some other centre, so that we describe in the sky not a circle around the sun, but a spiral, as we move with the sun around his enormous orbit. Now do you grasp that idea exactly? It is a very important one, for it opens up the subject to a very large extent. There is a star somewhere in the sky, we do not know where—some think it is Alcyone, or some other star, some think it may be a star in the Pleiades, and some others think it is a star somewhere else—but they know by deduction from the known to the unknown, as Brother Thomas told you this morning, that the sun is attracted himself by some unknown centre, and that he turns around it in an enormous circle, and as he turns, of course he draws the earth with him. In the course of 25,000 years in going around the signs of the Zodiac, he must take the earth into spaces where it has never yet been, for when he reaches this point in Aries, after 25,000 years it is only apparently the same point, just as when I came around the curve of the Horseshoe, I started around the first point and went around the curve, came back to the same point, but I was higher up; I was in another position. And so, when the sun gets back again to the point in Aries, where he was on the first of April this year, he will not be in the exact position in the universe of space, but he will be somewhere else, and in his journey of 25,000 years through billions upon billions of miles, he draws the earth into spaces where she never was before, and never will be as that earth again. He must draw her into cosmic spaces where things are different, and thus cause changes in the earth itself, for changes in cosmic matter in the atmosphere, in the space where the sun draws the earth, must affect the earth

and all its inhabitants. The ancients investigated this subject, and declared long ago this 25,000 years cycle, but it is only just lately, so to speak, that we are beginning to say we have discovered this. We know, as Nineteenth century astronomers, that it is a fact, or that it must be a fact, from deduction, but they knew that it was a fact because they had observed it themselves and recorded the observations.

The Egyptians had also the cycle of the Moon, which we know, and they had more cycles of the moon than we have, for the moon not only has her cycle of twenty-eight days, when she changes from full to disappearance, and then again to youth, but she also has a period of return somewhere over fourteen years, which must itself have its effect upon the earth.

Then they said, also, that the human soul had its cycles, it being 5,000 years. That is, the man died, or the king died, and his body was turned into a mummy in the hope that when, after his five thousand years cycle had elapsed and he came back once more to earth, he would find his mummy there? No; but that no one else should have taken his mummied atoms and made a bad use of them. Mummification is explained by us in another way. Their knowledge of the law of cycles caused them to make the first mummy. They held that a human soul returned; they also held that all atoms are alive, just as we do; that they are sensitive points; that they have intelligence belonging to the plane on which they are, and that the man who misuses atoms of matter, such as you have in your bodies and your brains, must stand the consequences. Consequently, saying that to themselves, they said, "If I die, and leave those atoms, which I have used so well, perhaps some other man will take them and use them badly, so I will preserve them as far as possible until I return, and then by a process destroy the combination of atoms, absorb them into some place, or position, where they might be put to good use." That may seem offensive to some to-day, but I am merely repeating the theory. I am not saying whether I believe it or not.

The ancient Egyptians who held these theories have disappeared and left nothing but the pyramids, the temples of Thebes, the Sphinxes and all the great monuments which are slowly being discovered by us. Where have they gone? Have they come back? Do the Copts now in Egypt represent them? I think not, although heredity is the boasted explanation of everything. The Copts are

their descendants? They know nothing, absolutely nothing but a simple language, and they live the life of slaves, and yet they are the descendants of the ancient Egyptians! What has become of them? The ancient Egyptians we think were co-labourers with the ancient Hindoos, whose cycle remains; that is to say, whose descendants remain, holding the knowledge, in part, of their fore-fathers, and we find that the Hindoos have held always the same theories as to cycles as the Egyptians held. They divided the ages of the world. They say manifestation begins, and then it lasts for a period called a Kalpa, an enormous number of years; that Kalpa is divided into ages. The small cycle is composed of a large number of years; one will be four thousand, another four hundred thousand, another will be a million, and so on, making a total which we cannot grasp with the mind but which we can write upon the paper.

Now, the idea of cycles came from the Hindoos, through the nations who spread out from there, for it is admitted that the land of the Hindustan is the cradle of the race. The Aryan race came down into Christendom, so that we find the Christians, the Romans, the Greeks and all people around that time holding the same theories as to cycles; that is that cyclic law prevails everywhere. We find it in the ancient mystics, the Christian mystics, the middle age mystics and the mystics of times nearer to ours.

If you will read the works of Higgins, who wrote the Anacalypsis, you will find there laborious compilations and investigations on the subject of the cycles. Do they obtain? Is there such a thing as a cycle which affects human destiny?

Coming closer to our own personal life, we can see that cycles do and must prevail, for the sun rises in the morning and goes to the centre of the sky, descends in the west; the next day he does the same thing, and following him, you rise. You come to the highest point of your activity, and you go to sleep. So day follows night and night follows day. Those are cycles, small cycles, but they go to make the greater ones. You were born, at about seven years of age you began to get discretion to some extent. A little longer and then you reach manhood, then you begin to fall, and at last you finish the great day of your life when body dies.

In looking at nature we also find that there are summer and winter, spring and autumn. These are cycles, and every one of them affects the earth, with the human beings upon it.

The esoteric doctrine that Brother Mead has been talking about,

the inner doctrine of the old theosophists and the present day theosophists, to be found in every old literature and religious book, is that cyclic law, is the supreme law governing our evolution; that reincarnation, which we talk so much about, is cyclic law in operation and is supreme. For what is reincarnation but coming back again to life, just what the ancient Egyptians taught and which we are finding out to be probably true, for in no other way than by this cyclic law of reincarnation can we account for the problems of life that beset us; with this we account for our own character, each one different from the other, and with a force peculiar to each person.

This being the supreme law, we have to consider another one, which is related to it and contained in the title I have adopted. That is the law of the return of impressions. What do we mean by that? I mean, those acts and thoughts performed by a nation—not speaking about the things that affect nature, although it is governed by the same law—constitute an impression. That is to say, your coming to this convention creates in your nature an impression. Your going into the street and seeing a street brawl creates an impression. Your having a quarrel last week and denouncing a man, or with a woman and getting very angry, creates an impression in you, and that impression is as much subject to cyclic law as the moon, and the stars, and the world, and is far more important in respect to your development—your personal development of evolution—than all these other great things, for they affect you in the mass, whereas these little ones affect you in detail.

This Theosophical doctrine in respect to cycles, and the evolution of the human race, I think is known to you all, for I am assuming that you are all theosophists.

It is to be described somewhat in this way: Imagine that before this earth came out of the gaseous condition there existed an earth somewhere in space, let us call it the moon, for that is the exact theory. The moon was once a large and vital body full of beings. It lived its life, went through its cycles, and at last having lived its life, after vast ages had passed away, came to the moment when it had to die; that is the moment came when the beings on that earth had to leave it, because its period had elapsed, and then began from that earth the exodus. You can imagine it as a flight of birds migrating. Did you ever see birds migrate? I have seen them migrate in a manner that perhaps not many of you have. In Ireland, and perhaps in England, the swallows migrate in a manner very peculiar. When

I was a boy, I used to go to my uncle's place where there was an old mass of stone ruins at the end of the garden, and by some peculiar combination of circumstances the swallows of the whole neighboring counties collected there. The way they gathered there was this: When the period arrived, you could see them coming in all parts of the sky and they would settle down and twitter on this pile of stone all day, and fly about. When the evening came—twilight—they raised in a body and formed an enormous circle. It must have been over forty feet in diameter, and that circle of swallows flew around in the sky, around this tower, around and around for an hour or two, making a loud twittering noise, and that attracted from other places swallows who had probably forgotten the occasion. They kept that up for several days, until one day the period arrived when they must go, and they went away—some were left behind, some came a little early, and some came too late. Other birds migrate in other ways. And so these human birds migrated from the moon to this spot where the earth began (I don't know where it is—a spot in space—) and settled down as living beings, entities, not with bodies, but beings, in that mass of matter, at that point in space, informed it with life, and at last caused this earth to become a ball with beings upon it. And then cycles began to prevail, for the impressions made upon these fathers when they lived in the ancient—mind fails to think how ancient—civilization of the moon, came back again when they got to this earth, and so we find the races of the earth rising up and falling, rising again and falling, rising and falling, and at last coming to what they are now, which is nothing to what they will be, for they go ever higher and higher. That is the theory, broadly, and in that is included the theory of the races, the great seven races who inhabited the earth successively, the great seven Adams who peopled the earth; and at last when this earth shall come to its time of life, its period, all the beings on it will fly away from it to some other spot in space to evolve new worlds as elder brothers who have done the same thing before in other spaces in nature. We are not doing this blindly. It has been done before by others—no one knows when it began. It had nothing in the way of a beginning, it will have no end, but there are always elder brothers of the race, who live on. As some have written, we cannot turn back the cycles in their course. The fire of patriotism cannot prevail against the higher destiny which will plunge a nation into darkness. All we can do is to change it here and there a little. The elder brothers are subject to law, but

they have confidence and hope, because that law merely means that they appear to go down, in order to rise again at a greater height. So that we have come up through the cyclic law from the lowest kingdoms of nature. That is, we are connected in an enormous brotherhood, which includes not only the white people of the earth and black people of the earth, and the yellow people, but the animal kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the mineral kingdom and the unseen elemental kingdom. You must not be so selfish as to suppose that it includes only men and women. It includes everything, every atom in this solar system. And we come up from lower forms, and are learning how to so mould and fashion, use and abuse, or impress the matter that comes into our charge, into our bodies, our brains and our psychical nature, so that that matter shall be an improvement to be used by the younger brothers who are still below us, perhaps in the stone beneath our feet. I do not mean by that that there is a human being in that stone. I mean that every atom in the stone is not dead matter. There is no dead matter anywhere, but every atom in that stone contains a life, unintelligent, formless, but potential, and at some period in time far beyond our comprehension, all of those atoms in that stone will have been released. The matter itself will have been refined, and at last all in this great cycle of progress will have been brought up the steps of the ladder, in order to let some others lower still in a state we cannot understand come up to them.

That is the real theory. Is that superstition? If you believe the newspapers that is superstition, for they will twist and turn everything you say. Your enemies will say you said there was a man in that stone, and that you have been a stone. You have not been a stone, but the great monad, the pilgrim who came from other worlds has been in every stone, has been in every kingdom, and now has reached the state of man, to show whether he is able to continue being a man, or whether he will once more fall back, like the boy at school who will not learn, into the lowest class.

(*To be concluded*)

letters • questions • comment

Intelligence is usually thought of as a characteristic of mind, yet the world presents instances of what seem to be intelligence in kingdoms other than the human, and where mind is not apparent. What can be said of the nature of intelligence?

H. P. Blavatsky says (*S.D.* I, 15) that the "Root," the great Breath as precosmic Ideation, "supplies the guiding intelligence in the vast scheme of cosmic Evolution." This suggests inherent intelligence at all levels and in every natural process. In space, it is manifest in every particle; in time, it exists from the beginning of evolution and subsists throughout the entire sweep of history. Its source is Life itself; its manifestation, in every action.

Life, in all its aspects, is characterized by action or motion. The direction taken by an individual form of life is one way of expressing the intelligence within. All nature is said to be conscious, and there is no action without intelligence behind it. Thus, in defining Theosophy, William Q. Judge says that "it is not a belief or dogma formulated or invented by man, but is a knowledge of the laws which govern the evolution of the physical, astral, psychical and intellectual constituents of nature and of man." This is but another way of proposing that the intellect is one of the components of beings in evolution, and, though intellect and intelligence are not the same, there is a relationship.

In an editorial in *Lucifer* (March 1890), H. P. Blavatsky quotes Thomas Edison on intelligence in matter:

> I do not believe that matter is inert, acted upon by an outside force. To me it seems that every atom is possessed by a certain amount of primitive intelligence: look at the thousand ways in which atoms of hydrogen combine with those of other elements. . . . Do you mean to say they do this without intelligence?

The inquirer is free to examine the natural world and draw his own conclusions. But if experience did not result in knowledge acquired and *stored,* how could any evolutionary pattern be sustained? Consider a given form, whether mineral, vegetable or ani-

mal: It functions in a predictable way and can, in fact, be defined and described because of the continuity of knowledge in that condition or state. When the life acts differently, it requires a new definition, because it has become something else. Think of the many new forms that have been created by the intervention of man, in both animal and vegetable kingdoms. By modifying the environment or affecting heredity, or both, new species have been developed. They are "new" because they *act* differently from the parent stock. Something has been added to the knowledge, or intelligence, in that particular form. The direction of action has been altered—a direction determined by the intelligence within.

In the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* (p. 128), H.P.B. states that "besides the force acting *in* matter there is also a force acting *on* matter." That force which acts *in* matter is the knowledge of the present moment, but the force acting *on* matter results in the growth and development of the being, when the expression of that inner force is augmented and altered by virtue of experience. The lower kingdoms are limited in scope because of limited intelligence, yet they have knowledge appropriate to their own plane. And, lest man look upon himself as a superior being, consider this from the *Transactions* (p. 123):

> The ant and ourselves possess different degrees of perception. We are on a higher scale of evolution than the ant, but, comparatively speaking, we are the ants to the plane above.

Because certain principles are latent or dormant in the earlier stages of evolution the manifestation of intelligence is limited. In man, for example, the principle of Manas, or mind, has been activated, and is evident to a greater or lesser degree. Memory is held and utilized by mind. In *Answers to Questions on the Ocean of Theosophy* (p. 93) a student notes that animals also seem to have memory, and wonders whether that is a sign of Manas. The answer is that—

> The animals have not arrived at self-consciousness, therefore *Manas* is latent in them; what they possess is Instinct—or established habit, which will repeat itself under proper stimulation or conditions. *Habit* is *memory* in the cells and organs of the body; animals, especially the higher ones, have a strongly marked memory of this kind, but it is far from the human kind.

It is because man acts as an individual, because he alone chooses the course his action will take, that he can proclaim himself the maker of his destiny.

THE CHRISTIAN SCHEME

Pagan Roots: The Trinity

FOLLOWING the Christian dogmas seriatim, if we concentrate our attention upon one which provoked the fiercest battles until its recognition, that of the Trinity, what do we find? We meet it, as we have shown, northeast of the Indus; and tracing it to Asia Minor and Europe, recognize it among every people who had anything like an established religion. It was taught in the oldest Chaldean, Egyptian, and Mithraitic schools. The Chaldean Sun-god, Mithra, was called "Triple," and the trinitarian idea of the Chaldeans was a doctrine of the Akkadians, who, themselves, belonged to a race which was the first to conceive a metaphysical trinity. The Chaldeans are a tribe of the Akkadians, according to Rawlinson, who lived in Babylonia from the earliest times. They were Turanians, according to others, and instructed the Babylonians into the first notions of religion. But these same Akkadians, who were they? Those scientists who would ascribe to them a Turanian origin, make of them the inventors of the cuneiform characters; others call them Sumerians; others again, respectively, make their language, of which (for very good reasons) no traces whatever remain—Kasdean, Chaldaic, Proto-Chaldean, Kasdo-Scythic, and so on. The only tradition worthy of credence is that these Akkadians instructed the Babylonians in the Mysteries, and taught them the sacerdotal or *Mystery*-language. These Akkadians were then simply a tribe of the Hindu-Brahmans, now called Aryans—their vernacular language, the Sanscrit[1] of the Vedas; and the sacred or Mystery-language, that which, even in our own age, is used by the Hindu fakirs and initiated Brahmans in their magical evocations. It has been, from time immemorial, and still is employed by the initiates of all countries, and the Thibetan lamas claim that it is in this tongue

---

Note.—"The Christian Scheme," begun in November, 1967, is collated from the works of H. P. Blavatsky. It recounts the historical background and early development of Christianity.

[1] Let us remember in this connection that Col. Van Kennedy has long ago declared his opinion that Babylonia was once the seat of the Sanscrit language and of Brahmanical influence.

that appear the mysterious characters on the leaves and bark of the sacred Koumboum.

Jacolliot, who took such pains to penetrate the mysteries of the Brahmanical initiation in translating and commenting upon the *Agrouchada-Prikshai,* confesses the following: "It is pretended also, without our being able to verify the assertion, that the magical evocations were pronounced in a particular language, and that it was forbidden, under pain of death, to translate them into vulgar dialects."[2]

Those who have seen a fakir or a lama reciting his mantras and conjurations, know that he never pronounces the words audibly when preparing for a phenomenon. His lips move, and none will ever hear the terrible formula pronounced, except in the interior of the temples, and then in a cautious whisper. This, then, was the language now respectively baptized by every scientist, and, according to his imaginative and philological propensities, Kasdeo-Semitic, Sycthic, Proto-Chaldean, and the like.

Scarcely two of even the most learned Sanskrit philologists are agreed as to the true interpretation of Vedic words. Let one put forth an essay, a lecture, a treatise, a translation, a dictionary, and straightway all the others fall to quarrelling with each other and with him as to his sins of omission and commission. . . . We quite agree with Professor Whitney that "the truism, that [for European critics?] it is far easier to pull to pieces than to build up, is nowhere truer than in matters affecting the archæology and history of India."

Babylonia happened to be situated on the way of the great stream of the earliest Hindu emigration, and the Babylonians were one of the first peoples benefited thereby.[3] These Khaldi were the worshippers of the Moon-god, Deus Lunus, from which fact we may infer that the Akkadians—if such must be their name—belonged to the

---

[2] "The *Agrouchada-Prikshai*, which discloses, to a certain extent, the order of initiation, does not give the formula of evocation," says Jacolliot, and he adds that, according to some Brahmans, "these formula were never written, they were and still are imparted in a whisper in the ear of the adepts" (*"mouth to ear, and the word at low breath,"* say the Masons).—*Le Spiritisme dans le Monde*, p. 108.

[3] Jacolliot seems to have very logically demonstrated the absurd contradictions of some philologists, anthropologists, and Orientalists, in regard to their *Akkado and Semito* mania. "There is not, perhaps, much of good faith in their negations," he writes. "The scientists who invent Turanian peoples know very well that in *Manu* alone, there is more of veritable science and philosophy than in all that this pretended Semitism has hitherto furnished us with; but they are the slaves of a path which some of them are following the last fifteen, twenty, or even thirty years. . . . We expect, therefore, nothing of the present. India will owe its reconstitution to the scientists of the next generation" (*Le Genèse de l'Humanité*, pp. 60-61).

race of the Kings of the Moon, whom tradition shows as having reigned in Pruyay—now Allahabad. With them the trinity of Deus Lunus was manifested in the three lunar phases, completing the quaternary with the fourth, and typifying the death of the Moon-god in its gradual waning and final disappearance. This death was allegorized by them, and attributed to the triumph of the genius of evil over the light-giving deity; as the later nations allegorized the death of their Sun-gods, Osiris and Apollo, at the hands of Typhon and the great Dragon Python, when the sun entered the winter solstice. Babel, Arach, and Akkad are names of the sun. The *Zoroastrian Oracles* are full and explicit upon the subject of the Divine Triad. "A triad of Deity shines forth throughout the whole world, of which a Monad is the head," admits the Reverend Dr. Maurice.

"For from this Triad, in the bosoms, are all things governed," says a Chaldean oracle. The Phos, Pur, and Phlox, of Sanchoniathon, are Light, Fire, and Flame, three manifestations of the Sun who is *one*. Bel-Saturn, Jupiter-Bel, and Bel or Baal-Chom are the Chaldean trinity; "The Babylonian Bel was regarded in the Triune aspect of Belitan, Zeus-Belus (the mediator) and Baal-Chom who is Apollo Chomæus. This was the Triune aspect of the 'Highest God,' who is, according to Berosus, either El (the Hebrew), Bel, Belitan, Mithra, or Zervana, and has the name "the Father." The Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva,[4] corresponding to Power, Wisdom, and Justice, which answer in their turn to Spirit, Matter, Time, and the Past, Present, and Future, can be found in the temple of Gharipuri; thousands of dogmatic Brahmans worship these attributes of the Vedic Deity, while the severe monks and nuns of Buddhistic Thibet recognize but the sacred trinity of the three cardinal virtues: *Poverty, Chastity,* and *Obedience,* professed by the Christians, practiced by the Buddhists and some Hindus alone.

The Persian triplicate Deity also consists of three persons, Ormazd, Mithra, and Ahriman. "That is that principle," says Porphyry, "which the author of the *Chaldaic Summary* saith, *'They conceive there is one principle of all things, and declare that is one and good'.*" The Chinese idol Sanpao, consists of three equal in all respects; and the Peruvians "supposed their Tanga-tanga to be one in three, and three in one," says Faber. The Egyptians have their Emepht, Eicton, and Phta; and the triple god seated on the Lotos can be seen in the

[4] Siva is not a god of the *Vedas,* strictly speaking. When the *Vedas* were written, he held the rank of Maha-Deva or Bel among the gods of aboriginal India.

St. Petersburg Museum, on a medal of the Northern Tartars.

Among the Church dogmas which have most seriously suffered of late at the hands of the Orientalists, the last in question stands conspicuous. The reputation of each of the three personages of the anthropomorphic godhead as an original revelation to the Christians through Divine will, has been badly compromised by inquiry into its predecessors and origin. Orientalists have published more about the similarity between Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Christianity than was strictly agreeable to the Vatican. Draper's assertion that "Paganism was modified by Christianity, Christianity by Paganism,"[5] is being daily verified. "Olympus was restored but the divinities passed under other names," he says, treating of the Constantine period. "The more powerful provinces insisted on the adoption of their time-honored conceptions. Views of the trinity in accordance with the Egyptian traditions were established. Not only was the adoration of Isis under a new name restored, but even her image, standing on the crescent moon, reappeared. The well-known effigy of that goddess with the infant Horus in her arms has descended to our days, in the beautiful artistic creations of the Madonna and child."

But a still earlier origin than the Egyptian and Chaldean can be assigned to the Virgin "Mother of God," Queen of Heaven. Though Isis is also by right the Queen of Heaven, and is generally represented carrying in her hand the Crux Ansata composed of the mundane cross, and of the Stauros of the Gnostics, she is a great deal younger than the celestial virgin, Neith. In one of the tombs of the Pharaohs—Rhameses, in the valley of Biban-el-Molouk, in Thebes, Champollion, Junior, discovered a picture, according to his opinion the most ancient ever yet found. It represents the heavens symbolized by the figure of a woman bedecked with stars. The birth of the Sun is figured by the form of a little child, issuing from the bosom of its "Divine Mother."

In the *Book of Hermes*, "Pimander" is enunciated in distinct and unequivocal sentences, the whole trinitarian dogma accepted by the Christians. "The light is me," says Pimander, the DIVINE THOUGHT. "I am the *nous* or intelligence, and I am thy god, and I am far older

---

5 Isis and Osiris are said, in the Egyptian sacred books, to have appeared (*i.e.*, been worshipped), on earth, later than Thot, the *first* Hermes, called Trismegistus, who wrote all their sacred books according to the command of God or by "divine revelation." The companion and instructor of Isis and Osiris was Thot, or Hermes II., who was an incarnation of the celestial Hermes.

than the human principle which escapes from the shadow. I am the germ of thought, the resplendent WORD, the *son* of God. Think that what thus sees and hears in thee, is the *Verbum* of the Master, it is the Thought, which is God the Father. . . . The celestial ocean, the ÆTHER, which flows from east to west, is the Breath of the Father, the life-giving Principle, the HOLY GHOST!" "For they are not at all separated and their union is LIFE."

Ancient as may be the origin of Hermes, lost in the unknown days of Egyptian colonization, there is yet a far older prophecy, directly relating to the Hindu Christna, according to the Brahmans. It is, to say the least, strange that the Christians claim to base their religion upon a prophecy of the Bible, which exists nowhere in that book. In what chapter or verse does Jehovah, the "Lord God," promise Adam and Eve to send them a Redeemer who will save humanity? "I will put enmity between thee and the woman," says the Lord God to the serpent, "and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

In these words there is not the slightest allusion to a Redeemer, and the subtilest of intellects could not extract from them, as they stand in the third chapter of Genesis, anything like that which the Christians have contrived to find. On the other hand, in the traditions and *Manu,* Brahma promises directly to the first couple to send them a Saviour who will teach them the way to salvation.

"It is from the lips of a messenger of Brahma, who will be born in Kuroukshetra, Matsya, and the land of Pantchola, also called Kanya-Cubja (mountain of the Virgin), that all men on earth will learn their duty," says *Manu* (book ii., slokas 19 and 20).

The Mexicans call the Father of their Trinity Yzona, the Son Bacab, and the Holy Ghost Echvah, "and say they received it (the doctrine) from their ancestors." Among the Semitic nations we can trace the trinity to the prehistorical days of the fabled Sesostris, who is identified by more than one critic with Nimrod, "the mighty hunter." Manetho makes the oracle rebuke the king, when the latter asks, "Tell me, O thou strong in fire, who before me could subjugate all things? and who shall after me?" And the oracle saith thus: "First God, then the Word, and then 'the Spirit'."

Ideas on the transmigrations and the trinity of man, were held by many of the early Christian Fathers. It is the jumble made by the translators of the New Testament and ancient philosophical treatises between soul and spirit, that has occasioned the many misunder-

standings. It is also one of the many reasons why Buddha, Plotinus, and so many other initiates are now accused of having longed for the total extinction of their souls—"absorption unto the Deity," or "reunion with the universal soul," meaning, according to modern ideas, annihilation. The animal soul must, of course, be disintegrated of its particles, before it is able to link its purer essence forever with the immortal spirit.

In the writings of Paul, the entity of man is divided into a trine—flesh, psychical existence or *soul,* and the overshadowing and at the same time interior entity of SPIRIT. His phraseology is very definite, when he teaches the *anastasis,* or the continuation of life of those who have died. He maintains that there is a *psychical* body which is sown in the corruptible, and a spiritual body that is raised in incorruptible substance. "The first man is of the earth earthy, the second man from heaven." Even James (3:15) identifies the soul by saying that its "wisdom descendeth not from the above but is terrestrial, *psychical, demoniacal."* Plato, speaking of the Soul (*psuché*), observes that "when she allies herself to the *nous* (divine substance, a god, as psuché is a goddess), she does everything aright and felicitously; but the case is otherwise when she attaches herself to *Annoia."* What Plato calls *nous,* Paul terms the *Spirit;* and Jesus makes the *heart* what Paul says of the *flesh.* In Adam came death, in Christ (resurrection), for it is he who first publicly taught mankind the "Noble Path" to Eternal life, as Gautama pointed the same Path to Nirvana. To accomplish both ends there was but one way, according to the teachings of both. "Poverty, chastity, contemplation or inner prayer; contempt for wealth and the illusive joys of this world."

"Enter on this Path and put an end to sorrow; verily the Path has been preached by me, who have found out how to quench the darts of grief. You yourselves must make the effort; *the Buddhas are only preachers.* The thoughtful who enter the Path are freed from the bondage of the Deceiver (Marâ)." (*Dhammapada.*)

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction. . . . Follow me. . . . Every one that heareth these sayings and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man" (Matt. 7 and 8). *"I can of mine own self do nothing"* (John 5:30). "The care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word" (Matt. 13:22), say the Christians; and it is only by shaking off all delusions that the Buddhist enters on the

"Path" which will lead him "away from the restless tossing waves of the ocean of life," and take him "to the calm City of Peace, to the real joy and rest of Nirvana."

We find even Irenæus, that untiring and mortal enemy of every Grecian and "heathen" heresy, explain his belief in the trinity of man. The perfect man, according to his views, consists of *flesh, soul,* and *spirit*. . . . And Origen, in his *Sixth Epistle to the Romans,* says: "There is a threefold partition of man, the body or flesh, the lowest part of our nature, on which the old serpent by original sin inscribed the law of sin, and by which we are tempted to vile things, and as oft as we are overcome by temptations are joined fast to the Devil; the spirit, in or by which we express the likeness of the divine nature in which the very Best Creator, from the archetype of his own mind, engraved with his finger (that is, his spirit), the eternal law of honesty; by this we are joined (conglutinated) to God and made one with God. In the third, the soul mediates between these, which, as in a factious republic, cannot but join with one party or the other, is solicited this way and that and is at liberty to choose the side to which it will adhere. If, renouncing the flesh, it betakes itself to the party of the spirit it will itself become spiritual, but if it cast itself down to the stupidities of the flesh it will degenerate itself into body."

Plato (in *Laws* x.) defines *soul* as "the motion that is able to move itself." "Soul is the most ancient of all things, and the commencement of motion." "Soul was generated prior to body, and body is posterior and secondary, as being, according to nature, ruled over by the ruling soul." "The soul which administers all things that are moved in every way, administers likewise the heavens."

"Soul then leads everything in heaven, and on earth, and in the sea, by its movements—the names of which are, to will, to consider, to take care of, to consult, to form opinions true and false, to be in a state of joy, sorrow, confidence, fear, hate, love, together with all such primary movements as are allied to these . . . being a goddess herself, she ever takes as an ally NOUS, a god, and disciplines all things correctly and happily; but when with *Annoia*—not *nous*—it works out everything the contrary."

In this language, as in the Buddhist texts, the negative is treated as essential existence. *Annihilation* comes under a similar exegesis. The positive state, is essential being but no manifestation as such. When the spirit, in Buddhistic parlance, entered *nirvana,* it lost objective existence but retained subjective. To objective minds this is

becoming absolute nothing; to subjective, NO-thing, nothing to be displayed to sense.

These rather lengthy quotations are necessary for our purpose. Better than anything else, they show the agreement between the oldest "Pagan" philosophies—not "assisted by the light of divine revelation," to use the curious expression of Laboulaye in relation to Buddha—and the early Christianity of some Fathers. Both Pagan philosophy and Christianity, however, owe their elevated ideas on the soul and spirit of man and the unknown Deity to Buddhism and the Hindu Manu. No wonder that the Manicheans maintained that Jesus was a permutation of Gautama; that Buddha, Christ, and Mani were one and the same person, for the teachings of the former two were identical. It was the doctrine of old India that Jesus held to when preaching the complete renunciation of the world and its vanities in order to reach the kingdom of Heaven, Nirvana, where "men neither marry nor are given in marriage, but live like the angels."

CONCEPTIONS OF DEITY

Christian writers, even of the most liberal sort, have never been able to appreciate the piety of the pagan Romans: for instance, that veneration of the emperor which the patron of Virgil, Augustus, caused to be instituted as a policy of state. Cicero's two declarations, that the way to heaven is through service to one's fatherland, and that each is to know himself to be a god, set the mood for the later worship of the emperor, which Virgil supported in a prominent passage of his *Aeneid,* and Ovid too in his *Metamorphoses.*

No comparison is to be made of such an attitude of respect with the Christian deification of Augustus's contemporary, Jesus. For in the Christian view the world and its creatures are not suffused with divinity. The deification of Jesus marks a radical designation, far beyond anything possible where all things are in essence *numina.*

—JOSEPH CAMPBELL

on the lookout

Reincarnation "Popularized"

At the conclusion of her third message to the American Theosophists, Madame Blavatsky wrote:

> We are outwardly creatures of but a day; within we are eternal. Learn, then, well the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, and teach, practice, promulgate that system of life and thought which alone can save the coming races.

It is now nearly eighty years since this charge to students was penned, and we look out on a vastly changed world. Not only the physical circumstances and the alignments of nations and races have changed, but the brittle shell of unbelief and the confident doctrines of materialism are giving way to plastic and suggestible states of mind. In her next message (the fourth), H.P.B. spoke of the "special perils" as well as the "special advantages" of the present cycle, and enough time has passed for some of these perils to have become quite plain. Among the advantages may be seen the gradual penetration of the idea of reincarnation at many levels of contemporary awareness. There is actually reason to think that before long it will be a "popular" idea. Yet to learn *well* this idea means to preserve its philosophical significance—not to let it fall into the role of mere "belief." That this may happen for some is evident from a recent tabloid presentation. In the *National Enquirer* for Dec. 17, 1967, the question "Will You Live Again?" is answered on the front page with a "YES" measuring four inches tall.

Dr. Stevenson's Research

Two pages of the *National Enquirer* are devoted to an interview with Dr. Ian Stevenson, head of the department of Neurology and Psychiatry in the School of Medicine of the University of Virginia, and to an account of his latest book, *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation,* published in 1966 by the American Society for Psychical Research. The article begins with a statement by Dr. Stevenson:

> The evidence indicates that reincarnation is a fact. I think it likely that people have been born before and that after they die they will be born again on this earth. I now have a list of almost 600 people all over the world who say that they have been born before and remember something of their previous life or lives. My colleagues and I have investigated 200 of these cases. They not only suggest that reincarnation is a possibility, they supply a good deal of evidence to indicate that reincarnation does occur.

Support from Science!

The rest of this article is devoted to the research methods followed by Dr. Stevenson, with examples taken from the reports found in his book. It will be a new experience for Theosophists, who have for so long worked against the grain of a "science-minded" age to spread the doctrine of reincarnation, now to find it being popularized through the prestige of scientific research! It is by such means, doubtless, that the attitudes of vast masses of people may be polarized from unbelief to belief, and while "truth" is hardly a matter of belief, this change will surely open the way to more realizing self-discovery for a great many people, once conventional barriers against the idea of the rebirth of soul are taken down. We are in the midst of a vast transformation of human attitudes, and such articles may be seen as symptoms of psychological tendencies that are likely to multiply in all directions as the destiny of the cycle unfolds.

Cayce's "Readings"

Of similar import is the publication by Paperback Library of *Edgar Cayce on Reincarnation,* by Noel Langley, with the help as editor of Cayce's son, Hugh Lynn Cayce. Such books tend to displace unexamined negative attitudes toward reincarnation with positive ones, through the personal drama and even glamour of what they have to tell. Students of Theosophy will find it helpful to study the life and career of Andrew Jackson Davis, the Spiritualist seer to whom H.P.B. often refers, as a means to understanding Edgar Cayce. Here, it seems, is a clear instance of how a pure psychic may see ancient truths through the glass of his own psychic principles, and accomplish much good for the sick and disturbed. The reflection of metaphysical teachings in the "readings" given by Cayce sometimes reminds the reader of the revelations of Swedenborg—having symmetries dimly suggesting aspects of the Wisdom Religion,

yet foreshortened and lacking in the power of philosophical principles. In this connection, H.P.B.'s "Is Theosophy a Religion?" provides a needed light and explanation.

Christianity's "Lost Chord"

The author, Noel Langley, seems particularly interested in showing that Christianity made a great mistake in outlawing reincarnation and devotes his later chapters to unraveling the confusions of Christian history at the time when this took place. He says in his final chapter:

> Reincarnation, then, is not a theory; it is a practical code of ethics directly affecting human morality.
>
> It was an essential part of the early Gospels, and its removal by two macabre pagans has never been satisfactorily accounted for. Scattered references to it still exist in the Bible, but the encyclopedias have been steadily diminishing their emphasis on it since as far back as 1911—the last edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* to deal frankly with it under the heading of Metempsychosis.

"Necessary to Sanity"

While popular in style, books like this one often exhibit the moral strength of a logic familiar to Theosophical students. The author says:

> Our obsessive preoccupation with external superficialities, and our servile anxiety to conform to the modern not only rob us of individuality and stature, they corrode us until we have become complacent and stultified. Is it only because we have rejected the law of reincarnation that we squander three quarters of our lives, impressing others, pretending to be what we are not? If so, there will have to come a time when we find it almost impossible to be honest with ourselves; and by then nothing will be more painfully and desperately necessary to our sanity.

Paperback Anthology

Still another constructive influence in behalf of reincarnation comes with publication as a paperback (one of a series called "Quest Books") of *Reincarnation: An East-West Anthology,* by the Theosophical Publishing House of Wheaton, Ill. This book, the original anthology by Cranston and Head, is a thorough compilation of expressions about reincarnation, taken from world literature. Its distribution as a paperback should help to give reincarnation a broader philosophical context than will be found in other popular

publications. (We are constrained to notice, here, the strange anomaly that the Theosophical Publishing House should also be promoting, as another "Quest" offering, a "simplified course of Hatha Yoga." Either the publishers do not know what Madame Blavatsky said about the danger of Hatha Yoga, or they do not care. [See *The Secret Doctrine* I, 95, also *Modern Panarion,* p. 338.])

Plato's Doctrine of "Reminiscence"

Meanwhile, in the area of serious scholarship, the return to the themes of Platonic philosophy brings a natural reference to reincarnation. In *The Tacit Dimension,* a recent paperback concerned with the scientific theory of knowledge, the author, Michael Polanyi. finds Plato's approach to the question of what knowledge is, and where it comes from, the best or rather the only solution that has been offered. Polanyi starts out with a basic consideration:

> It is a commonplace that all research must start from a problem. Research can be successful only if the problem is good; it can be original only if the problem is original. But how can one see a problem, any problem, let alone a good and original problem? For to see a problem is to see something that is hidden. It is to have an intimation of the coherence of hitherto not comprehended particulars. The problem is good if the intimation is true; it is original if no one else can see the possibilities of the comprehension we are anticipating. To see a problem that will lead to a great discovery is not just to see something hidden, but to see something of which the rest of humanity cannot have even an inkling. All this is a commonplace; we take it for granted, without noticing the clash of self-contradiction entailed in it. Yet Plato has pointed out this contradiction in the *Meno.* He says that to search for the solution of a problem is an absurdity; for either you know what you are looking for, and then there is no problem; or you do not know what you are looking for, and then you cannot expect to find anything.

No Other Solution

> The solution which Plato offered for this paradox was that all discovery is a remembering of past lives. This explanation has hardly ever been accepted, but neither has any other solution been offered for avoiding the contradiction.

The crucial point, here, is that self-knowledge is *recovery* rather than *dis*covery. That such serious students of cognitive processes wonder if Plato might have been right, in the *Meno,* suggests that the revival of reincarnation, for the world of modern thought, will not be left to the popularizers alone.

Opposite of Christianity?

The growing popularity of Eastern religious ideas is beginning to get renewed critical attention from spokesmen for Christianity. A columnist for the *Christian Science Monitor* (Dec. 13, 1967), after speaking generally of the influx in the West of Hinduism and Buddhism, makes this comment:

> Side by side with many fine teachings promoting peace and kindliness, there is also embedded in some basic doctrines of the East the concept that man's individuality is not immortal and indestructible, but eventually absorbed into the Creator, as a wave of the ocean eventually subsides into the sea.

This writer repeats the old charge that reincarnation followed by "final absorption" may lead to the view that "there is not much point in effort to improve oneself, or mankind." And concerning perfection by absorption into Deity, he says: "This is the very opposite to Christianity's teaching concerning the eternality of man as God's child or idea, and its exhortation to improvement and the helping hand."

Immortality not "Personal"

This sort of objection to loss of personal identity often finds expression in Christian criticism of Buddhism. Seldom is it pointed out that much of what we think of as individual "personality" is hardly worth preserving. Actually, some scholars say that the denial by Theravada Buddhism of a surviving ego-soul is mainly a means of protecting believers against a sentimental, personal conception of immortality. As Edward Conze remarks in *Buddhism: Its Essence and Development*:

> Mr. John Smith, turned immortal, would not recognize himself at all. He would have lost everything that made him recognizable to himself and others. And he could be born anew only if he had learned to deny all that clutters up the immortal side of his being—which lies, as the Buddhists would put it, outside his five skandhas—if he would deny all that constitutes his dear little self. Buddhist training consists, indeed, in systematically weakening our hold on those things in us which keep us from regaining the immortality we lost when we were born.

The idea of many lives does indeed reduce the fear of death and the anxious, competitive struggle for existence; it leads to another conception of striving, the pursuit of values that grow naturally out of a conception of man as an undying being. The Christian idea of individuality is maintained at the cost of both philosophy and mysti-

cal insight, both of which are necessary to the conception of spiritual individuality. One sees, here, the importance of the doctrine of the monads, as taught by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*.

Vindication of Cagliostro

Alexander Cagliostro, the eighteenth-century healer and wonder-worker, has found a champion in a well-known historian, François Ribadeau Dumas. His book, *Cagliostro,* published in France in 1966, has been issued in English in the United States by Orion Press ($6.95). According to the publishers, Dumas, through his historical studies, came upon hitherto unpublished documents enabling him to write a more complete story of the man who amazed all Europe with his achievements in medicine, brought new life to the Masonic movement, and gave dramatic evidence of the reality of occult powers. Cagliostro also attracted the enmity of those who thrive on human ignorance, and his open-hearted generosity and trusting disposition made him vulnerable to attack and betrayal. Toward the end of his volume, Dumas says:

> Even today one reads the most blatant errors about Cagliostro from the pen of authoritative writers. There are two reasons for this: first, because the Inquisition has hidden from sight the archives of the condemned man (he announced that he had voluminous archives in his luggage); and, secondly, because the public appetite was titillated by piquant imputations of the defamer Sachi and the blackmailer Theveneau de Morande which had been spread by the Inquisition.

Lies Exposed

Dumas does not really unravel the historical mysteries of Cagliostro's life—who could do this?—but he does make plain the dignity and unqualified philanthropy of Cagliostro's career, so that the calumnies against his character are seen to be a tissue of lies. It is plain from this work that Cagliostro pursued his course with a clear sense of mission; that he was indeed a servant of humanity; that his teachings were of an emancipating, theosophical character; and that he was ever responsive to human pain and tender to every sufferer he encountered. Dumas traces his career from about 1775 to the fateful moment in 1795 when he was brutally arrested in Rome by the Inquisition, tried for and convicted of heresy, and incarcerated in the Castel Saint Angelo. The obscurity of his origin is by no means dispelled, and the author seems to credit the claim that Cagliostro was Guiseppe Balsamo—which Cagliostro himself

flatly denied—but Dumas is nonetheless persuaded of the absolute sincerity and even the occult knowledge of this extraordinarily colorful man. Early in the book Dumas says:

> Now Cagliostro has stated explicitly that he was born in Malta (to the spiritual life). When questioned about his actual place of birth, that was the answer he invariably gave, even going so far as to say that he was born in Malta of a noble family, and that he had been educated at Medina. Regarding his birthplace, whether metaphorical or in terms of reality, one may at least say that Malta lay at the very heart of Cagliostro's development.

An Inner Birth

> There was much in the extraordinary epic of the Knights Hospitaler (or the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem) to nourish the mind of a youth whose imagination was dedicated to the highest ideals, and who saw confirmed what he had always thought he knew—namely, that according to the words of St. Paul, the world is made up of things unseen but made visibly manifest. Malta proved to be the harbor from which Cagliostro would sail forth to conquer the world.

It was here, Dumas believes, Cagliostro became "twiceborn":

> This accession came to him, therefore, through the mysteries of St. John: tradition, the esoteric language of the Apocalypse, the intuitive method of visionaries, the revelations of the cabala. . . . It also implied the possibility of changing his name. The purpose of every baptism is to kill the old man, the object of sin, in order to give birth to a man regenerated. The new man is allowed to take a new name. Theophrastus Bombastus chose the name of Paracelsus, he who walks towards the light; Robert Fludd became De Fluctibus; Samuel Richter, Sincerus Renatus, etc. No one ever knew the real name of the Count de Saint-Germain. And in his *Memoirs* Cagliostro wrote: "In Malta . . . I then took for the first time . . . the name of Count di Cagliostro."

Cagliostro's Teaching and Allegiance

The reader will be unable, often, to distinguish between fact and veil in Dumas' book, but he will soon be persuaded of the author's deep good will toward Cagliostro, and his desire to set the record straight. Yet H.P.B.'s article "Was Cagliostro a Charlatan?" will remain the only reliable source concerning this strange personage. Of him she wrote:

> There are many landmarks in Cagliostro's biographies to show that he taught the Eastern doctrine of the "principles" in man, of "God" dwelling in man—as a potentiality *in actu* (the "Higher

Self")—and in every living thing and even atom—as a potentiality *in posse,* and that he served the Masters of a Fraternity he *would not* name because on account of his pledge he *could not.*

Limitless Powers

In a recently published book on Community, *Turning into Tomorrow* (Philosophical Library), by Watson Thomson, the author reproaches the Western man for his arrogance, pointing out how the tendency to think that his powers are limitless is an attitude which "has been transferred from the individual scientists to 'Science,' and to the State, which organizes them in great research teams, pays them, and commandeers their product." Mr. Thomson's discussion of a balancing humbleness is of interest:

> It is frequently said that the only way to restore humility to its needful place is to "get back to religion," by which, in English-speaking cultures, is meant Christianity. Since the supposedly Christian nations of the West lead the world in aggression, imperialistic conquest, militarism and Faustian presumptuousness, this solution seems of doubtful aptness. Of course, it is true that the Scriptures, especially in the New Testament, place a high value on humility, Jesus proclaiming it as one of the chief Virtues. But this is surely because Jesus and the original Christianity were, after all, oriental. What we need is a different attitude to Time and Eternity, a greater appreciation of the creative value of passivity, and many other attributes, including humility, which are characteristics of the East rather than of the West.
>
> But all this does not quite get us into the heart of the matter. To appreciate how all-inclusive is the difference between the oriental mode of thought and the occidental, one has to see that to oriental thought ultimate validity lies not in the sensate, the discrete, the determinate, but in the all-embracing formlessness from which we come at birth and to which we go in death. Which is God, Brahman. For us, even God is a determinate being; he has "attributes." To wise men of the East, to see God thus is not only presumptuous, it is the means of closing us off from the most blissful and fulfilling experience of all: identification with that eternal formlessness which is Brahman.

Elsewhere, this writer gives evidence of belief in reincarnation as the only common-sense means of explaining the presence on earth of wise and highly developed souls. Such currents of thought are increasingly found in the thoughtful books of the times, bespeaking the philosophic approach to human problems that is rapidly becoming the theme of the rising cycle.